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outposts

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CONTRIBUTORS

JOHN SMITH	DONALD THOMAS
P. J. HELM	SIMON BUSH
MURIEL GRAINGER	VERNON SCANNELL
FALLON WEBB	FRANCIS NEWBOLD
ROY MACNAB	MARTIN FAGG
ROBIN SKELTON	RICHARD KELL
EDWIN BROCK	JAMES SINGER
BERNARD SMITH	MICHAEL JOHNSON
PETER REDGROVE	HUGH CREIGHTON HILL
MARGARET STANLEY-WRENCH	DEREK STANFORD
DOROTHY COWLES PINKNEY	

EDITED BY HOWARD SERGEANT

Two shillings

JOHN SMITH

All Those Years

ALL those years
Daily, nightly,
You by my side
And a third lying
Like death between.
What did it mean
So still, uncrying?
And then it died.
Daily, nightly,
All those years.

All those years
Daily, nightly,
Hard as a stone
Yet no shape taken;
Huge as a door
Open; as a wide moor
Blindly forsaken
With blood sown.
Daily, nightly,
All those years.

All those years
Daily, nightly,
Staring wide-eyed
Alone with the dead
In the dark lying.
No sound, no crying,
No small word said.
And you by my side
Daily, nightly
All those years.

P. J. HELM

Swildon's Hole, Mendip: A First Descent

SO this is it.

Not the wide-arched alladin-crustured entrance,
Pre-Raphaelite in structure, imagination carved;

But

A narrow man-hole where the water disappears,
Through which you drop, feet first,

Into the night.

A birth reversed.

Wriggle upon the narrow berth; the stream

Thunders all Piccadilly in your ears;

The rocks oppress, their rifts loaded with lead

Like Western films. Each twist presents a tougher

Problem to be solved, like crawling headlong through

Geometry. The bistre walls, and two great nailed boots

Inching their way before your nose make up the view.

And now there's room to stand, to sweat, then shiver

In the womb, negative image of a mountain peak.

Back. You are one with water as the water falls

From neck to feet, one with the limestone as you limpet

Across the rock, one with the fire that jets

From lamps upon the calcite-covered walls.

Daylight whispers, curiously blue, from the wide air
ahead;

Ten thousand blind and uncontaminated years

Eject you to the human world outside.

Birthpangs again.

You grin at the rest,

Too tired for adjectives,

Conscious of something done.

The leader looks ironical,

And says: "That takes an expert

Fifteen minutes."

MURIEL GRAINGER

The Antagonists

THE black knight and the white am I,
And one of them is doomed to die,
For in the conflict one must slay,
And one will bear the palm away.

If resolution can be made
When blade is intercepting blade,
Only where they clash and meet
Could reconciling be complete.

I shall win, and I shall lose,
Whichever combatant I choose:
The shouts of triumph in my ears—
And in my eyes the vanquishd's tears.

FALLON WEBB

No Alibi

YOU'D think it's easier to look
Plumb into your reflection's eye
Than meet your neighbour's with a lack
Of shame, in cool complacency.

I do not find it so. Despite
My qualms, I know he can at worst
Only surmise the smallest part
Of my self-will, evasion, waste;

Whereas the clear, all-knowing gaze
Of this twin self implacably
Pierces dissimulation's guise,
Explodes excuse and alibi.

ROY MACNAB

Daylight in Chelsea

I

ONCE more leaves of the plane
Tree lie upon the square,
And stretching long fingers the rain
Gathers up the dying year.

In this dark season also, dredger
Of wasted days and dreams,
I seek a tally in my ledger,
Where losses are true gain it seems.

Into these strange streets I brought
The sun-born image of my vision,
Walked it up and down and sought
To defy all history's derision.

That mocks the slim Romantic vein,
Such that blooded Byron for Greece,
Campbell for his bulls in Spain,
And all seekers of the tawny fleece.

O Chelsea is still a camp for these
Lost legions of The Larger Life,
Carving their quaint philosophies
With private vision for a knife.

II

This morning walking in the street,
Where blue plaques above the door
Declare that my forerunners' feet
Explored these paths before,

I saw how in the end
The image must have turned to stone,
No longer the heat to bow and bend
Pulsating life about the bone,

But exile and the loss of root
That links us with the global coil;
They were too late to pluck the fruit
That lay upon their native soil,

Rimbaud, Whistler, Henry James,
Art sets them in an exile's pose,
And there were countless other names
That never above the portals rose.

I like to think with the dying James,
The O.M. newly in his pocket,
That America not England claims
The mind behind the tired eyes' socket.

And Katherine Mansfield now disease
Had laid its doom upon her heart,
Dreaming of home in the Antipodes
And welding its image in her art.

But exile is more than divorce
Of land and man, unlike the swallow,
Our natures find no homeward course,
No archetypal signs to follow.

III

I stand outside the small pet-shop,
Founded in Eighteen-hundred-and-seven,
And watch the mice in their circular top
Revolving a way to Heaven,

And mark the pattern of our search.
O life eludes the grasping mind
That hungers for its vision's perch;
The instinct of our stars is blind.

South Africa.

ROBIN SKELTON

The Sparrows

FROM a sour garden wrinkled with trees
in the well of yellow houses, tall
as yesterday's syllables, the birds,
plucking at crumbs, step into mind,
random and delicate, with all
the desperate aplomb of their kind.

Looking for language fit to start
the paved flanks of this place between
yesterday's shibboleths and let
the needling logos split the hard
imprisoning stone, is to say green,
say music, is to live aloud

until the deafened paving break.
From that sour garden webbed with trees
twelve sparrows step into my mind,
random and dedicate. Around
the desperate ease of time's mistake
the pick pick of these birds resounds.

EDWIN BROCK

An Absolution

TO know that we know nothing
is the mark: where small hills
rise deep canyons dip again, and
where a candle carves a tiny dark
a larger darkness nullifies the gain

Before this wisdom we pretend
to kneel: we point the wise man out
into his throne; and yet I feel
that what I do not feel is wiser
still: a poor thing but mine own

For knowing I know nothing
leaves me cool: my head can scuff
its bloody heels in vain; I'll call
no wise man out who calls me fool; I
suffer sinners with the tired insane

But feeling nothing is another
fish, that wriggles on the hook for
habit's sake, which though we skin
and cook and garnish it, no mouth
makes water with the dish we bake

No hands are proud to hold
an emptiness; no feet will sweat
on earth's infinity; and thighs
look foolish when possessed
by thighs that ask no nudity

I'll call no wise man fool
who knows my plight; my definition's
easy to attain; that knowing we know
nothing that we feel, is mortal man's
immortal ease from blame.

BERNARD SMITH

We Came As You Said

WE came as you said
neither early nor late—
it didn't much matter
what time we arrived
you said in your letter—
we weren't surprised
to find no one there
and yesterday's papers
still in the door.

We put down our cases
and each found a chair
and sat at the window
and stared at the view
you had often described
in your letters . . .
we thought of you.

Your papers and books
lay just as you left them,
cold tea in the pot
and a yellowing fag-end
and 'Dippermouth Blues'
on the portable gram—
we played it once
then played it again.

So you see it was like
any day before—at least
that's what we thought
though we hardly spoke
and moved through the house
as if you were there—
a ghost—
or just gone to the post.

We understood later
like drawing a blind
to uncover a view—
and knew
as you said in your letter
why it didn't matter
what time we arrived
neither early nor late,
sometime . . .
or never.

PETER REDGROVE

On Catching a Dog-Daisy in the Mower

(After the death of a close friend in an accidental fall)

“WELL, that was silly; too near the edge:
White flesh goes flying and the bee escapes,
It was an old flower anyway and not a prize,
Inside, the shade of good tobacco finely-grained.
What a shock the bee got though, snatching away
His stool like that as he sat down.
I'll clear it up; so white a flesh
Against the green; I'll let it char,
But tuck the mangled neck back again
Right out of sight, behind the crowded bush
Of roses red as—how they shine, it seems to hum.”
So I buzzed about my jobs, mumbling my mind,
Stringing sentences and trying words
And soon forgot whose flesh was white, and shreds
Charred back to soil, and what roses were as red as
And summer dry as, now, and how swift
The tawny humming bee snapped away.
“I'd better pick the white bits up,
And put them on the heap, for tidiness.”

MARGARET STANLEY-WRENCH

Chichester Cathedral, stormy weather

THIS bone-white bodkin spire awling the sky
Pricks my eye, too, like a needle, piercingly,
Suddenly, and as if for the first time.
Light is summoned to it. Threaded with the sun
The bare blade of it, razor shell washed up
By the fields' green tides, stands simple as a thought
Made visible, frozen, man's naked need of God.
An ivory shaft, stabbing the sullen blue
Of storm, it holds back the crouching lion hills,
And the humble, nudging, brown and chaffinch coloured
Roofs that hem it in with their human needs
Are hidden by distance. Only the austere
Spire and the carcase of the cathedral lies
Facing the violet storm, reflecting light,
And leading my eye from the green, level ground
Up and towards the violence of the sky
Across whose face clouds move like the wrath of God.

DONALD THOMAS

After Ambition

WIND them in age and sum them up in prayer,
So little time is left to fret about,
They fall like feathers in the pillowed air.

Their glance immobilized becomes a stare;
Eyes void as stones of sense they do without
Wind them in age and sum them up in prayer. ▲

The thought that time is short and chance is rare,
Once they have reached this point, dispels all doubt.
They fall like feathers in the pillowed air.

Escapes from thoughts of what was missed, despair
At having nothing more they want to shout
Wind them in age and sum them up in prayer.

Thin, dry and fragile, unfit for repair,
Hiding, afraid to break should they jump out,
They fall like feathers in the pillowed air.

Sunk in their wealth of plumage, unaware
Of anything they ought to think about,
Wind them in age and sum them up in prayer,
They fall like feathers in the pillowed air.

SIMON BUSH

Lear in Ballsbridge

I NEVER thought that I should see you there
Old man alone, with the pathetic hair.
This is no night for you to wander wild
Wringing those telling hands.
Father, your storm is past; now summer passion raves
Among the sleepless lovers of the town.
Your rage is spent: go find some haycock now.
Sleep easy, leave the dark to those who lust.
Your daughters lecher still? No matter then:
The thunder passed, give your bruised limbs their rest.
I am uneasy that I saw you go;
Under the street light nobly your grey hairs
Shoulder length groping grave-wards in their grief.
God grant you resting, venerable sire;
No Fool guides now. I make this prayer who am
Not of your age, kith, kin, lineage or time.

Eire.

VERNON SCANNELL

A Great Soldier

SEEN from a distance of a hundred feet
He looks like any tweedy gentleman,
Idly busy with his hollyhocks,
Except, perhaps, his movements are too neat,
And too erect the grizzled cranium
Which never, surely, flaunted curling locks.

But fix that head in telescopic sights
The first impression would be drilled right through:
Eyes, hard and bright as medals; nose,
Clarion bold, whose trumpeting excites
Pacific air and threatens violence to
The captive tulip and the wounded rose.

But when the evening puts down smoke below,
Salted with intimations of mortality,
Does he wonder whether neutral truth
Has filled his Crime Sheet in? Or does he go
To bed with absolute serenity
To rest as still as any murdered youth?

FRANCIS NEWBOLD

The Last Days

THE mountain towers above the town,
The town feasts in its black shadow.
The mountain will not topple down.

The thread of smoke that leaves its crown
By night becomes a sullen glow:
The mountain flowers above the town.

Roundabout and up-and-down
The streets the townsfolk go. They know
The mountain will not topple down.

Summer's green and autumn's brown
Yield to winter's coat of snow.
The mountain lowers above the town.

Rumblings perplex doctor and clown;
Each dawn they say 'I told you so—
The mountain will not topple down.'

Yet sages, with portentous frown,
To history will try to show
Why—its red heart burst on the town—
The mountain rose and toppled down.

MARTIN FAGG

West Side Story

TWO factions of a like indignity,
On New York's West Side, where they lay their scene,
From new-born malice break to young delinquency,
Where poor white blood makes poor white hands obscene.
Tony is Romeo: Maria is Juliet;
Inessentials only are changed;
New labels in place of 'Montague' 'Capulet'—
By more than what's in a name estranged.
Does switch-blade or zip-gun instead of stiletto
Seem distressingly crude and deficient in class,
Too remote from the world of Ivor Novello,
As yet unsoftened by museum glass?
For bloodshed as all things mellows with age
And becomes quite snug on the printed page.

RICHARD KELL

The Burning Crate

FILLED for the last time
The crate becomes a tank
Of liquid crackling gold,
And gives the arid mind
Refreshing light to drink ;
Whose truth I would distil,
Yet all the words are cold :
Saying, earth's energies
Declare a holy will.

Suppose I walked away,
Jerked back when a sudden scream
Fell round me like a noose,
And saw the taloned fire
Snatching a child at play :
Would this renew the dream,
Blessed by the one creation,
Or instantly compel
My sorrowful astounded
Fury for the hell
That mocks the power of choice
In man or simple child,
And claim my pitying hands
To challenge what fulfilled
Some dark belief, and now
As willingly destroys?

Though to love's instancy
I give my faith, being human,
The cold words haunt me still,
Teaching us to admire
Perfections that could kill
By accident in Eden ;

And, from another myth
Correcting our despair,
To fuse the dying with
The pity and the fire.

JAMES SINGER

The Sea: an interlude

THE attitude of waves
predicts the movements of the stars
along the western arc of night.
Within the cloistered emptiness
of my room, the reality
of voices spoken in the tide
defies my memory. I ask,
What place is this, what time ;
must I confirm existence by a neon sign,
a parking meter's tick, a street post's name?

The sea devours Sirius. A bus
goes by and leaves the street below
in silence. The nearby lighted windows
cast a feeling with a meaning
that runs along my arms: their shades
are pulled, but in their light
I assume a warmth that is secret
from the sky, that is secret from this room
where I compute emotion by the breeze
that bathes my skin and hear
somewhere a startled gull explode the night.

This interlude as Orion sets:
*Behind my back, the unseen rustling
of the rising swan which will cross
the holy sky, bright and cold,
and descend before the dawn.*

U.S.A.

MICHAEL JOHNSON

Here and Now

FAR more than usually dead, my dear,
The Stars; and, though some yet can prove
Their sly connivance at our love,
They neither influence nor care.

Were man's self loving legends lost,
At these burnt stones beyond the air
We still would stare; a world is most
Remarkable, for being there.

DOROTHY COWLES PINKNEY

The Archaeologists

OURS is an era of digging.
With narcissistic elan
We dig in the murk of the ego
For freudian falsifications,
We dig under civilizations
For the sub-sub-conscience of Man.
While the roll of United Nations
Gets along as well as it can,
Layers of ashen libel
Are being removed from the Bible,
The Hittites are being decoded,
And Adam is being exploded
As one of a cannibal clan.
The twentieth century riddle
Will probably be enshrined
As a new sort of Nero's fiddle,
An archaeological find.

U.S.A.

REVIEWS

Collected Poems: Robert Graves (Cassell, 8s. 6d.).

AT periodical intervals Mr. Robert Graves makes a point of pruning his work and issuing a fresh version of his *Collected Poems*. As a critic of his own poetry, Mr. Graves has never been over-indulgent and though he assures us in the foreword to the 1959 volume that "no silver spoons have been thrown out with the refuse," most readers will remember poems which they will think he ought to have included. "The survival rate," says Mr. Graves, "has kept fairly even throughout the period, at five poems a year." What an achievement this volume is! It is true that, despite his growing reputation as a major poet, one cannot direct attention to any poem which might be described as a great poem; but there are many which reveal the hand of the master craftsman, and few which let the otherwise consistently high standard down.

Although Mr. Robert Graves first became known as a poet during the first World War, and since that time has established himself as an outstanding writer of prose, until the last ten years or so he has been somewhat overshadowed in his poetic capacity by Eliot, Auden and others. That may have been due to the fact that whilst these poets strove to create new modes of expression, and concerned themselves with human conditions in general, Mr. Graves preferred to develop traditional forms and, for his subjects, to concentrate upon the individual's subtle states of feeling. In doing this, he has acquired a technical skill and a precision of analysis which have exercised an impressive influence upon contemporary poetry and particularly upon the poets who have come into prominence during the last few years. Let it be made clear, though, that there is no dullness in evidence in Mr. Graves's poetry—which is more than can be said of the work of his younger disciples today (Graves would not, I suspect, own them as such). However slight the theme—and Graves can be very slight—he always contrives to make it interesting and to stamp it with his own personality. Indeed, this makes it difficult to point to any specific quality that is recognisably Graves's (Integrity immediately springs to mind), for it is the personality rather than any philosophy or definable attitude to life which is expressed in these enjoyable poems.

HOWARD SERGEANT.

Selected Poems: Stanley Kunitz (Dent, 15s.).

Life Studies: Robert Lowell (Faber, 10s. 6d.).

The Wilderness: Louis O. Coxe (O.U.P., 20s.).

The Winding Road: Les Plettner (Vantage Press, \$2.75).

IT would not be possible for the student of American poetry to draw any general conclusion from the four volumes under review, for whilst Mr. Kunitz and Mr. Lowell display assured techniques in completely personal manners, the mediocrity of their two contemporaries is equally individualistic.

All the praise that has been lavished upon the poetry of Mr. Kunitz is justified. His craftsmanship is such that, reading him, one is swept, line by line, to the end of each poem in complete confidence—never is there that uneasy sensation of holding back, in case the words go wrong. And yet . . . and yet. . . . Can one say that craftsmanship of this order may lead to a too easy felicity, so that even the confidence becomes a soporific? There is a tendency among critics today to praise—and rightly so—the dexterity which enables a poet to resolve the problems of prosody and meaning in such a way that one finally contemplates a kind of hammered perfection. Is it perverseness then, when one finds this, to look for something else—a freshness perhaps, or an immediacy, which escapes such formulation? If this is so, then it is in perverseness that I turn to the love poems, and in particular to *Night Piece*, where

“Up ever so many stairs it is a new
Sweet (look! it’s) morning in each other’s arms.
Tell me, yes I truly, by what charms
Have I been, darling, yes I really do.”

achieves the immediacy of Cummings with the voice of Kunitz. Having said this, I escape the charge levelled by the poet against critics who

“Reviewing me without undue elation
A critic who has earned his reputation
By being always Johnny-on-the-spot
Where each contemporary starts to rot
Conceded me integrity and style
And stamina to walk a measured mile
But wondered why a gang of personal devils
Need clank their jiggling bones a public evils.”

For I am happy to take the personal devils without too much insistence upon the regularity of the dance to which their bones jig.

Mr. Robert Lowell's craftsmanship is of an entirely different order—quiet and apparently casual—but what a mistake it would be to underrate it! I must confess that his work did not jell in my ear at all until I had heard him reading it, then I succumbed at once to the sing-song, faintly nasal, transatlantic drawl. Charm, that's the word! Charm and a deceptive ease which, together, make him a master of occasional verse:

"In Munich the zoo's rubble fumes with cats;
hoydens with air-guns prowl the Koenigsplatz,
and pink the pigeons on the mustard spire.
Who but my girl-friend set the town on fire?"

Inevitably, poetry of this kind will sometimes become too private for public consumption; yet, even when this happened, one cannot but admire the control:

"The Charles
River was turning silver. In the ebb-
light of morning, we stuck
the duck
-s web-
foot, like a candle, in a quart of gin we'd killed."

Unfortunately, the long autobiographical *Life Studies*, which forms the third part of the book, loses the sophistication of the earlier poems, and often deteriorates into a parody of Robert Lowell.

I have never heard of a correspondence-course for poets, but if one exists—given a conscientious pupil—I imagine the result would be something along the lines of Mr. Coxe's collection. It is, apparently, his third, and comprises thirty-four "shorter lyric poems" and "the long narrative poem, *The Wilderness*." Of the shorter poems little can be said except that they are unexceptional and unexceptionable: the subject-matter ranges from Glens to Diesel Trains and back again via Lent and Pentecost; when an alliterative line can be used, an alliterative line is used; and when a "rounding river" can be made to "strive for sea / Past pleach and patchwork fields" . . . well . . . it does! But it is in the magnum opus that the poet really lets his hair down. Here the missionary Duclos—who strides across rooms kicking beech logs into the fire—sets out to claim the Huron country "for God, the Order, and for France." Standing always "four-square against the wind" he storms his cassock-striding way (presumably for God, the Order and for France) through twenty-six pages of pines, pistols, and a local brand of Apache called The Abenaki. But finally, as the jazz-man had it: the butcher hadda cut 'im down. "He

saw stars hustle, trees stride into air / And cried "Not now", falling, falling face down / Into the upborne sea. Peter bent over / To pluck the cross-shaped dirk out, wet and black." All good, clean, extroverted fun!

And so to Mr. Plettner. If you are an aficionado of the Patience Strong school, he is a must. Presumably there is a way of telling bad from good, but—pardon my ignorance—to me they all sound the same.

EDWIN BROCK.

New Voices: selected by Alan Pryce-Jones (Hulton's Pocket Poets, 2s. 6d.).

A Book of South African Verse: selected by Guy Butler (O.U.P., 18s.).

Contemporary English Poetry: Anthony Thwaite (Heinemann, 10s. 6d.).

A Field of Vision: Norman Iles (Mitre Press, 7s. 6d.).

MR. PRYCE-JONES has selected thirty poets, at the rate of one poem each, mainly from those who have had contributions accepted by the *Times Literary Supplement*. The result provides a fair cross-section of recent verse, together with a thoughtful introduction. "We can be very grateful to the isolated 'poets': indeed, we must: and there are many more, even further isolated who ought to be read and appreciated, yet have not the benefit of such auspicious sponsorship. Several of the included names, such as Davie, Enright, Gunn, Jennings, Larkin, Logue, Nott, Thomas, and Thwaite are not in need of this aid: all the other names are known by those who really read poetry: no particularly new sods are cut. "The best hope for poetry" does not lie, as the selector declares, "in this reintegration of poetry and ordinary life", but primarily in its being read. One should not cavil at such an elegantly produced, well printed and cheap anthology: but one may point out, again and again, that the same sort of effort should be made on behalf of all those fugitives and recluses whose work has to be conceived and brought forth without the use of trumpets and shawms.

A year or so ago an anthology of South African verse was reviewed in this magazine. Now follows one from Oxford which, if better printed and produced, does not improve on Roy MacNab's volume. *Poets in South Africa* had the superiority of including poems by native writers, totally absent from the Oxford collection

which contains work that can be called South African only by diligent stretching of the term. There are thirty-seven poets represented in Roy MacNab's book, thirty-three in Guy Butler's. Thirteen poets appear in both, the selection being larger in Mr. Butler's. Each book is dedicated to Roy Campbell. Call them complementary. Terence Heywood stands out, rather angularly, in the Oxford book, and the inclusion of L. D. Lerner, Peter Jackson and Anne Welsh is well merited.

Mr. Anthony Thwaite's introduction to contemporary English poetry, adapted from lectures originally given to Japanese students, is a useful guide for those who are merely beginning to read modern verse. It provides a critical and historical framework, and names. Of the framework one cannot reasonably complain, although the omission of any reference to Browning, for example, and an underestimation of the influence of Pound, are to be deplored. When one comes to names, the old difficulty of inclusions and omissions crops up once more. There are no references whatever to Norman Nicholson, Christopher Fry, Ronald Bottrall, Ronald Duncan, W. S. Graham, Herbert Read, and many more poets who have been more than names in the last thirty years. Mr. Thwaite tries to balance a mention of *The Movement* with a glance at *Mavericks*: he picks here and picks there, perhaps a little too obviously: an embarrassment of richness surrounds his silences. If so-and-so, why not so-and-so? Nevertheless, E. & O.E., this remains a useful book for students and newcomers.

Norman Iles believes that "he who loves inspiration will be transformed into an artist by love of it." Such a vague and optimistic tenet would appear to excuse a certain naïvety, if not a lack of vital technique. Inspiration by itself is no better than the poem in a dream which turns out to be of little value when written out in the daylight: for, as Mallarmé said, poems are written with words, and the words must mean more than they say. However, here are more than thirty poems intent on simply suggesting simple subjects, with sexual metaphors at times overt, at times hidden; a cloudy spiritual background hinted at; and the memory of pieces of Blake and Lawrence impeding a natural conclusion.

HUGH CREIGHTON HILL.

Out of the World and Back: Andrew Young (Hart-Davis, 10s. 6d.).

TWO years ago a dear friend of mine, now dead, offered me the pamphlet volume of Andrew Young's verse-narrative *Into Hades*. I took it away, but returned it unread. Now, after loss, I appreciate it better.

Out of the World and Back is made up of two poems (*Into Hades* and *A Traveller in Time*), and their theme is: what happens to the soul when the body dies and is buried. Many will think of Canon Young as a descriptive writer—in lyric verse and botanical prose. But that is only half the story. "When the spring of short Nature poems ran dry," writes Canon Young in a note to this volume, "I was not altogether sorry; for while my interest in Nature was intense, it was not so deep as the underlying interest that prompted me to change my style and write *Into Hades*." Prosodically, the present book certainly does represent big changes: from neat rhymed lyrical measures to the freely accounted, but not invariably easy, blank verse of the last two poems. But when we turn from technique to thought, it is possible to see that latter work's derivation. In Canon Young's lyrics there are certain dark hints at what Mrs. Crowe called "the night side of nature." Persephone, the poet remembers, spent part of her year in "death's dream Kingdom;" and the dead birds, inquiring scare-crows, and even the shadow beside one as one walks are there in the verse to remind us of it. Indeed, his perhaps best anthologised poem bears the title *A Prospect of Death*.

What is of great interest in the transition from first to second manner is the full development of something only previously hinted at in images. *Into Hades* and *A Traveller in Time* deal with the continuing life of the spirit following upon the death of the body. The poems are 'adventures', not pieces of polemic; yet the plausibility of action and setting is made good by the imaginative argument elicited by each turn of events. In this sense *Out of the World and Back* constitute two metaphysical poems.

Of the two pieces *Into Hades* seems to me by far the best. As the title suggests, the poem deals with the bodiless spirit's chaos and terror, while *A Traveller in Time* is concerned with the soul's rediscovery of its rest and home. Man has generally proved more successful in imagining hells than heavens, and to this rule Canon Young is no exception. The first of these poems is richly scattered with subtle vivid piquancies of speech. Here we have the dead man's spirit hovering about the tombs of his own church:

"Gazing about the churchyard,
 I saw it was autumn, berries on the hedge
 Hung in bright bracelets, bryony, nightshade, how vain
 To remember the names. A silence grew more than silence,
 A vacuum, that drew me to a window,
 One of my friends stood at the lectern eagle;
 Jove's messenger, the brazen bird looked bored,
 It had so often listened to the Lessons."

These lines have fine beauty, pathos, and humour about them.
 Above all, they sound authentic.

Beside them, many passages in *A Traveller in Time* wear a
 "pre-Raphaelite tapestry" air. The latter is a learned poem, but
 all too evidently a "literary" composition.

DEREK STANFORD.

Other Books Received:—

Theme for a Threnody: Olive Emily Young (Vantage Press, \$2.00).

Polished Mirror: Maria Antellini (Vantage Press, \$2.00).

Autumn Leaves: George Lester Denman (Vantage Press, \$2.00).

The Golden Falcon: Wyche Retter Hart (Vantage Press, \$2.00).

Prismatic Voices, an international collection of poetry (Falcon's
 Wing Press, \$4.00).

NOTICES

POEMS INVITED. Contributions are invited for a well-known national magazine for whom Howard Sergeant acts as Poetry Editor. Lyrical poems (having a direct impact upon the reader) and light and humorous poems should be sent, together with a stamped addressed envelope, to Howard Sergeant at the *Outposts* address. Generous payment. Length not more than 20 lines.

YOUTH CLUB ACTIVITIES. A mixed Youth Club with headquarters in South East London is planning to form a Literary Group which it is hoped will help prospective writers, and which will produce its own magazine (publishing verse, stories, essays, criticism, reportage, etc.) as a means to this end. Young men and women (under the age of 21) who live in South London and who are interested in helping with or taking part in this experiment are invited to contact the Club Leader, Howard Sergeant, at 209 East Dulwich Grove, London, S.E.22.

OUTPOSTS PUBLICATIONS. The latest additions to the *Outposts* Modern Poets Series are : *The Labyrinth* by Martin Scholten and *The Walled Garden* by Muriel Grainger. See publications list for details.

THE HEADLANDS, poems by Howard Sergeant (published by Putnam's) can be ordered through local booksellers or obtained from this address, price 7s. 6d. (8s. including postage). "Those who despair of the aims and values of modern poetry should ponder Mr. Sergeant and think again."—*Contemporary Review*.